

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 5544

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, PFOR, FI, NO

SUBJECT: NORWEGIAN FOREIGN MINISTER VISIT TOFINLAND

REF: HELSINKI 2548

1. IN PRE-CHRISTMAS MEETING WITH DCM, DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS VIBE READ FROM MEMCON OF FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND'S TALKS IN HELSINKI WITH FOREIGN MINISTER KARJALAINEN AND PRESIDENT KEKKONEN, SUPPLEMENTING INFORMATION PROVIDED IN HELSINKI'S EXCELLENT SUMMARY (REFTEL. CLASSIFICATION HAS BEEN UPGRADED IN VIEW OF VIBE'S REPEATED EXPRESSION OF CONCERN THAT KAJALAINEN NOT BECOME AWARE THAT THE U.S. HAS BEEN BRIEFED IN DETAIL ON THE VISIT.

2. FINNISH AMBASSADOR TO OSLO APPARENTLY TOOK INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE IDEA OF THE VISIT. BEFORE HIS ARRIVAL, FRYDENLUND HAD BEEN TOLD THAT FINNS WERE PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS TO HEAR ABOUT RECENT SOVIET-NORWEGIAN NEGOTIATIONS.
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FRYDENLUND ESSENTIALLY REPEATED THE BRIEFING HE HAD GIVEN THE NATO COUNCIL, I.E. USSR WISHED TO BE CONSULTED IN ADVANCE OF NORWEGIAN MOVES ON SVALBARD BUT THERE WAS NO PRESSURE FOR JOINT RULE AND SOVIETS UNDERSTOOD THAT NORWAY HAD TO TREAT ALL PARTIES AS EQUALS. FRYDENLUND OUTLINED THE NORWEGIAN LEGAL POSITION REGARDING THE CONTINENTAL SHELF OFF SVALBARD, ARGUING THAT SHOULD THE SVALBARD TREATY AUTHORIZE SIGNATORY POWERS TO EXPLOIT THE SHELF RESOURCES, A RACE TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT ON THE SHELF WOULD ENSUE AND CREAT DIFFICULTIES IN THIS SENSITIVE AREA WHERE IT WAS NEITHER IN U.S. OR SOVIET INTEREST THAT THERE BE UNREST OR CONFLICT.

3. IN DISCUSSING US-SOVIET NEGOTIATIONS, KARJALAINEN MADE CLEAR THAT FINALDN FOLLOWED THE TALKS VERY CLOSELY SINCE FRICTION IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS HAD SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR FINLAND. REFLECTING APPARENT IRRITATION WITH SWEDEN'S PRIME MINISTER PALME, KAJALAINEN SAID HE COULD NOT SEE HOW ANY OF THE SUPER POWER AGREEMENTS HAD GONE AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF SMALL AND MEDIUM POWERS. (VIBE NOTED HERE THAT FINNS HAD BEEN EMBARRASSED AND IRRITATED BY PALME'S SPEECH AT LABOR CONFERENCE IN FINLAND IN LATE SUMMER, WHICH HAD PROVIDED SOVIET CIRTICISM IN PRAVDA AND IZVESTIYA.) BY DELIBERATELY AVOIDING CRITICISM OF THE SUPER POWERS, KARJALAINEN SAID THAT FINLAND MAINTAINED GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE USSR AND U.S.

4. IT WAS IN CONTEXT OF EXPRESSING UNHAPPINESS WITH EUROPEAN PRESS TREATMENT OF FINLAND AND KARJALAINEN MENTIONED THAT U.S. WAS MORE UNDERSTANDING OF FINLAND'S SPECIAL POSITION THAN MANY EUROPEAN STATES. HE SINGLED OUT DIE WELT AND SVENSKA DAGBLADET AS THE MOST UNFAIR CRITICS. KARJALAINEN SAID FINLAND'S POLICY WAS BASED ON ITS SPECIAL POSITION, IT WAS NOT INTENDED TO HAVE BROADER APPLICATION AND HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY OTHER WEST EUROPEAN COUTRIES SHOULD NOT SEE THAT FINLAND'S POLICY WAS ADVANTAGEOUS FOR THE WHOLE EUROPEAN SITUATION. FRYDENLUND SUGGESTED THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES SHOULD BASE THEIR RELATIONS ON RESPECT FOR EACH OTHER'S POLICIES. IN THE CASE OF NORWAY, THIS WOULD MEAN AVOIDANCE OF ANY DISCUSSION OF "FINLANDIZATION," WHILE FINLAND WOULD

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AVOID CRITICIZING NORWAY FOR ITS RELATIONS WITH NATO. (COMMENT: NORWEGIAN OFFICIALS HAVE REACTED NEGATIVELY IN THE PAST TO USE OF THE WORD "FINLANDIZATION," IN PART BECAUSE THEY ARE SENSITIVE TO DOMESTIC CRITICISM THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS TOO ACCOMMODATING TOWARD THE USSR.)

5. RE KEKKONEN PLAN, KARJALAINEN PRETENDED IT WAS A LOCAL

MATTER AND WOULD NOT AFFECT THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG THE GREAT POWERS. HE COMMENTED (IN ADDITION TO REMARKS NOTED IN REFTTEL) THAT THE IDEA OF EXTENDING THE PLAN TO COVER PART OF THE USSR WAS UNREALISTIC. HE CONCLUDED THAT FINLAND WOULD BRING THE PLAN UP FROM TIME TO TIME BUT INDICATED THAT IT WOULD NOT PRESS THE ISSUE. ASKED WHETHER NORWAY HAD ANY MORE INSIGHT INTO WHY THE PLAN WAS REVIVED THIS FALL, VIBE SAID THAT THE FINNS HAD ALSO BEEN SURPRISED BY PODGORNYY'S INITIATIVE; PRESUMABLY THEY WERE RESPONDING TO SOVIET ENCOURAGEMENT; AND THEY WERE ALSO UNDER SOME DOMESTIC PRESSURE FROM THE YOUNG TURKS IN THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND CENTER PARTIES TO KEEP THE ISSUE ALIVE. (FACT THAT SOVIET COUNSELOR SMIRNOV ASKED DCM ON DEC 24 WHAT HE THOUGHT NORWEGIAN REACTION WAS TO THE KEKKONEN PLAN ALSO SUGGESTS SOME CONTINUED SOVIET INTEREST IN THE PLAN.)

6. THE FOLLOWING WERE AMONG OTHER ISSUES RAISED OF SOME INTEREST: (A) CSCE: BECAUSE OF CONFLICTING SCHEDULES FOR FINLANDIA HOUSE, HELSINKI WOULD PREFER THAT THE THIRD PHASE BE HELD IN MAY-JUNE OR SEPT BUT IT COULD ACCEPT JULY-AUGUST MEETING; (B) UN: KARJALAINEN EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN OVER THE LACK OF RESTRAINT SHOWN BY THE MAJORITY AT THE LAST UNGA SESSION; (C) THE TWO COUNTRIES AGREED TO KEEP EACH OTHER INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS IN LAW OF THE SEA AND DISCUSSED A NORDIC CANDIDATE FOR THE WORLD COURT.

7. VIBE ALSO PROVIDED A FEW ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON THE KEKKONEN MEETING. FRYDENLUND FOUND KEKKONEN VERY INTERESTED IN THE ATTITUDE OF OTHER COUNTRIES TOWARD THE IEA EVEN IF FINLAND COULD NOT JOIN THE AGENCY ITSELF. DOMESTICALLY, KEKKONEN EXPRESSED ANXIETY OVER THE FUTURE OF FINNISH INDUSTRY, NOTABLY WOOD PULP PROCESSING, IN A PERIOD OF RECESSION. IN DISCUSSING THE USSR, HE STRESSED

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HIS BELIEF THAT THE SOVIET LEADERS ARE PRAGMATISTS AND REMARKED THAT, ACCORDING TO HIS INFORMATION, BREZHNEV'S HEALTH IS MUCH BETTER THAN IT WAS PICTURED IN PRESS STORIES IN CONNECTION WITH HIS RECENT VISIT TO FRANCE.
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